The copy filmed here has been reproduced thanks to the generosity of:

D.B. Weldon Library
University of Western Ontario

The images appearing here are the best quality possible considering the condition and legibility of the original copy and in keeping with the filming contract specifications.

Original copies in printed paper covers are filmed beginning with the front cover and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression, or the back cover when appropriate. All other original copies are filmed beginning on the first page with a printed or illustrated impression, and ending on the last page with a printed or illustrated impression.

The last recorded frame on each microfiche shall contain the symbol ⟶ (meaning "CONTINUED"), or the symbol ▽ (meaning "END"), whichever applies.

Maps, plates, charts, etc., may be filmed at different reduction ratios. Those too large to be entirely included in one exposure are filmed beginning in the upper left hand corner, left to right and top to bottom, as many frames as required. The following diagrams illustrate the method:

L'exemplaire filmé fut reproduit grâce à la générosité de:

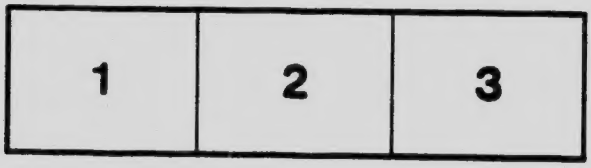
D.B. Weldon Library
University of Western Ontario

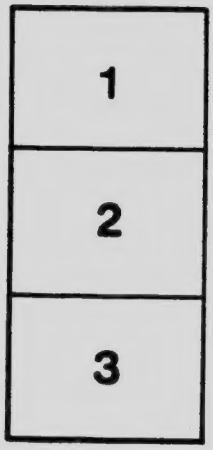
Les images suivantes ont été reproduites avec le plus grand soin, compte tenu de la condition et de la netteté de l'exemplaire filmé, et en conformité avec les conditions du contrat de filmage.

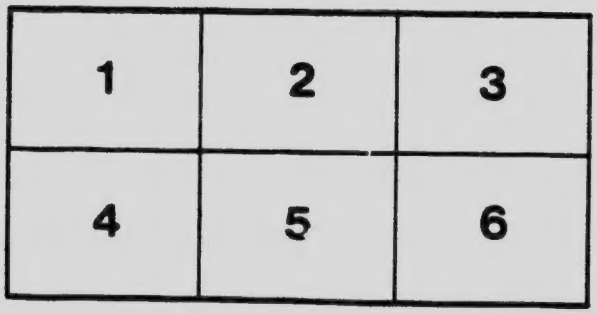
Les exemplaires originaux dont la couverture en papier est imprimée sont filmés en commençant par le premier plat et en terminant soit par la dernière page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration, soit par le second plat, selon le cas. Tous les autres exemplaires originaux sont filmés en commençant par la première page qui comporte une empreinte d'impression ou d'illustration et en terminant par la dernière page qui comporte une telle empreinte.

Un des symboles suivants apparaîtra sur la dernière image de chaque microfiche, selon le cas: le symbole ⟶ signifie "A SUIVRE", le symbole ▽ signifie "FIN".

Les cartes, planches, tableaux, etc., peuvent être filmés à des taux de réduction différents. Lorsque le document est trop grand pour être reproduit en un seul cliché, il est filmé à partir de l'angle supérieur gauche, de gauche à droite, et de haut en bas, en prenant le nombre d'images nécessaire. Les diagrammes suivants illustrent la méthode.







U. W. O. LIBRARY

"OMAR"

FROM THE TRENCHES

LIBRARIES

THE UNIVERSITY OF WESTERN ONTARIO

LONDON CANADA

Omar from the Trenches

By

George Dottridge

Omar from the Trenches

By

GEORGE DOTTRIDGE

I

Stand to! for Morning in the Trench of Night
Has flung his Starshell, putting Stars to Flight.
  And lo! the Sergeant with the Rum is come,
"Stand down and post Day-sentries now," "All right!"

II

Dreaming when Starshells fluttered thro' the Sky
I heard a Voice outside the Dugout cry:
  "Awake, my little one, it's two o'clock."
Sadly I crooned "Thy Sentinel am I."

III

And at the "Stand down," those who stood outside
The Dugout, waiting, "Get a move on," cried,
  "You know how little while we have to stay,
Big Working Parties threaten—get inside."

V

Winter indeed has gone with all her Snows
And last week's Fifteen Francs—where, no one knows,
  But still our Rum its Warmth and Pleasure yields
And still the "Stokes" its frequent mortar throws.

VI

And Fritz's boit is shot; but asinine
Fool-bluffing newspapers with "Whine, Rhine, Whine!
  Ach Rhine!" The Tagenblatt cries to poor Fritz,
That yellow Cheek of his to incarnadine.

VII

Come, fill the Spoon, and in the Fire of Spring,
Our Winter Garment, made of Leather, fling
  The German Eagle has but little Time
To fly—and lo! the Bird is on the Wing.

VIII

And look—a thousand Sandbags ev'ry Day,
No! many thousands filled with Belgian Clay!
  And the first Winter Month may bring the close,
And take John Bull and Jack Canuck away!

IX

But come with Jack Canuck and leave the Lot,
Of Hindenberg and Von Tirpitz forgot,
  Let Bernstoff lie and ramble as he will,
And Hyphenates cry "Deutschland!" Heed them not.

X

With me along some Strip of Herbage sown
With Cabbages and Carrots—all mine own,
  Where Gas Alerts and Grenades are not known,
And pity Kaiser Wilhelm on his throne.

XI

There with a Newspaper beneath the Bough,
A little Beer, a Smoke or two—and Thou
  Beside me, rambling about Politics,
Ah! Canada were Paradise enow!

XII

"How sweet are Home and Comfort" burble some,
Others "Yes, let our Teuton cousins come,"
  Ah! don a Skirt and send us Cigarettes,
Oh! the brave music of the distant drum!

XIII

Look to the Shell that flies around us "Lo!
Whistling," she says "Into the Air I go
  And once my iron Casing burst apart,
Fly to your Dugouts! Look out there, below!"

XIV

The Dugout that we set our minds upon,
Blows up—or isn't bothered—and anon,
  Like Warts upon old Belgium's muddy Face,
Staying its little day or two—is gone.

XV

And those who dodged the vindictive Grenade,
And those who promptly for their Dugouts made,
  Alike to Sentry Duty are returned,
They're much too busy now to be afraid.

XVI

Think—in this battered [illegible] Line Trench we stay,
Waiting for Hun Surpri[illegible] [illegible]sight and Day,
  Where sentry after sentry with his "Gat,"
Abides his Hour or two and goes away.

XVII

They say the Germans find it hard to keep
The land where Willie gloried and drank deep,
  And Joffre's going to hunt the Wild Ass,
And put him and his Papa safe to sleep.

XVIII

I sometimes think that ne'er has blown so red
The Rose, as Roses will, when Willie's fled,
  Tha' [illegible]very Flower will in the garden grow
More [illegible]utiful when Prussianism's dead.

XIX

And this delightful Herb's once tender green
Dyed by the foulest Work the World has seen,
  Will grow again in Radiance—Ah, who knows
How badly Germanized we might have been!

XX

Come, gentle Sergeant, fill the Cup that clears
To-day of past Regrets and future Fears,
  To-morrow in old Blighty I may be,
And I'll come back—in nineteen thousand years.

XXI

Lo! Rum we want, the strongest and the best,
Lick up the Spoon, then stand awhile and jest—
  Let's drink our "tot" and clean our trusty "Gats,"
Then one by one creep silently to rest.

XXII

And we, who erst made merry in a Shed
With six to eight tiles missing overhead,
  Can keep a Smile on in a Dugout too,
If we've swiped Sandbags to make soft our Bed.

XXIII

Ah, make the best of what we yet must spend,
Lest Britain too into the Mud descend,
  Mud unto Mud and under Mud to lie,
Sans Wit, Sans Truth, Sans Justice—What an end!

XXIV

Alike to those who for a Zepp prepare
And those who after Tirpitz' Navy stare,
  A Northcliffe from the Tower of Darkness cries
"Hark" but his Talk is neither here nor there.

XXV

Why, all these ha'penny Sages who dispense
Stale Platitudes so learnedly—from whence,
  Got they their turgid Wisdom?—Purchase some
Lest strident Paper—till they write some Sense.

XXVI

Oh, come with Jack Canuck and leave those "Wise"
To talk: some insects worry such as—Flies
  Keep still—and listen (all the Rest is Lies)
The Pow'r that caused this War forever dies.

XXVII

Myself when young did eagerly frequent
Tory and Whig—and heard great Argument,
  Of Food and Creeds and Taxes—and I found
The whole blamed lot was mere Advertisement.

XXVIII

With them all kinds of Politics I'd spout,
But dimly guessing what I talked about,
  And this was all the Harvest that I gleaned:
"I earn my Bread and Cheese—or go without."

XXIX

Into this Mess of Talk, the Truth not knowing
Like Golden Syrup, sticky—ever flowing
  And messing up the Scheme of Things entire,
I ladled Platitudes—and sat back blowing.

XXX

"Why," I would ask "was this Man hurried hence?"
And further "Why was that Man rushed back thence?"
  Another and another Rag to chew
And worry with colossal Impudence.

XXXI

Up from Bayswater and thro' Notting Gate
I rode—and on the Throne of Britain Sate
  And many Knots unravelled on the Road,
A Cop held up his Hand—I had to wait.

XXXII

There was a Hand I could not thrust aside,
There was a Power o'er which I could not ride
  And while I fumed, the Policeman let us by,
(One humble Copper—what a thing is Pride!)

XXXIII

Then to the ranting Press itself I wrote,
Saying: "O, Screamers, here's what gets my Vote,
  Four million Soldiers—fighting in the Dark,
Not proud nor wise enough to send a Note!"

XXXIV

So to this dusty Trench my Face I turned,
And something of the Soul of Nations learned
  And Heart to Heart it whispered "While you live
Fight! for this War must never be adjourned!"

XXXV

I think the Navy—modest fugitive,
Retiring yet so argumentative,
  Fights chiefly via Sayville from Berlin,
And by its Fiction doth its glory live.

XXXVI

For in the New York Papers, day by day,
The wireless from Sayville had its Say,
  Till even yellow Journalism blushed
And murmured "Gently, Brother, Gently, Pray."

XXXVII

Ah, be discreet—what boots it to repeat
Our words when Bathmats slither 'neath our feet?
  Bullets to-morrow and Mud yesterday,
Don't fret about it—get Old Fritzie beat.

XXXVIII

A year ago—Annihilation's waste,
This year, the Germans whipped to suit your taste,
  Their Star is setting—and the Battle Plan
Of Kaiser Wilhelm crumbles—Let's make haste!

XXXIX

How long, how long should Working Parties last?
And why do Officers all walk so fast?
  Better in Trenches, fighting fretful Fritz,
Than work for a C. E. enthusiast.

XL

You know, my friends, how long since I abjured
My old Enthusiasm—I've been cured
  The more you do the more you have to do,
All Life's uncertain—but that Fact's assured.

XLI

For Work and Hustle as with Rule and Line
And Laziness without I can define,
  But after all, I never cared for Work,
The "dolce far niente" stuff for mine!

XLII

And lately in a lone Estaminet,
I heard a bunch of soldiers have their Say;
  It wasn't what they said that made me gasp,
The Language they employed caused my Dismay.

XLIII

The Swear that doth with Vigor infinite,
The end of Bad Ones and their Doom recite.
  Two Monosyllables, that in a Trice,
Assign to you a Fate that's definite.

XLIV

The mighty Kaiser—that victorious Lord,
—Whose dialectic ravings as a sword
  The Berlin journals fiercely wave aloft,
Makes "God damn England" quite a mild word.

XLV

But leave them all to fulminate—with me,
The Quarrel of the Nations come and see
  And from some Sandbag on the Parapet
Take Shots at Fritz who's shot so oft at Thee!

XLVI

But if the Job you're on—your Khaki Dress,
End in the Victory you strive for—yes
  Then see that while Thou art, Thou art but what,
Thou startedst—Private. Thou canst not be less!

XLVII

While the Rat plays upon the Parapet,
Think of the Morning and the Rum you'll get,
  And when the Sergeant with the soothing Draught,
Draws up to thee—drink deep and do not fret.

XLVIII

'Tis all a Railway Map of ups and downs,
While Father draws up schedules—Willie clowns
  Hither and thither moves—and causes Wrecks;
The whole blamed Argument should cost Three Crowns.

XLIX

For in and out, above, about, below,
'Tis nothing but a wicked Fireworks show,
  And now and then you get a chance to shoot,
—You can't see anything to shoot at, though.

L

Poor Fritzie has no Right to Ayes or Noes,
But East or West as rules the Kaiser, goes;
  He gives his life for Willie's vanity,
And knows it all the Time—you bet he knows.

LI

The Working Party toils—when one Job's done,
Starts on another, which is scarce begun,
  Ere rushes up a different Engineer,
And takes the Party elsewhere—it's great Fun.

LII

To that embracing Thread they call barbed wire,
I've got to own I never did aspire,
  You wind it round some Stakes in No Man's Land,
And Fritzie gets you with Machine Gun fire.

LIII

Of Belgian Clay we built a Parapet,
The Belgian Rain came down and we got wet,
  Soon after came the burning Belgian Sun,
And we supplied the honest British Sweat.

LIV

I tell thee this—in making out the Bill,
Don't think it's all correct and fair until
  All Prussianism's dead, Von Bissing hung,
And others punished who conspired the ill.

LV

The Hun hath shot his bolt—and little doubt
It hurts his Vanity—well, let him shout;
  He's got to take up Waiting once again,
But not in Britain—we can do without.

LVI

This, now, he knows—a Tip however slight,
A little light Employment every night;
  The modest Penny in the Tavern caught,
Are better than an Empire lost outright.

LVII

O, Thou, who didst with Howitzer and Krupp,
Beset the Road we had to wander up,
  We've had our Share—and now it's up to thee,
We have Thy Gruel ready—"Haud and Sup."

LVIII

O Thou whose sense of Honor's so awry,
Betrayer of our Friendship—Royal Spy,
  For all the evil wherewith Germany
Is blackened—Thou shalt answer bye and bye.

KUZA-NAMA

LIX

Listen again. On Sentry-go one Night,
Lit up by Starshell's parabolic Flight,
  As on the Firing-Step I stood alone,
I heard Lee-Enfields whisper of the fight.

LX

And strange to tell—of all that Deadly Lot,
Not one could count the Germans it had shot.
  And suddenly mine own impatient cried:
"Is this a real War—or is it not?"

LXI

Then said another: "Surely not in vain,
My former Owner's numbered with the Slain,
  And those responsible for this mad War
Will surely never have the Power again."

LXII

Another said: "The Crown Prince,—Idiot—
Had Power and Friends—not good, but quite a lot;
  Shall he who killed his army in pure Pride,
Retain his Power and Friends? I fancy not."

LXIII

None answered this; but after Silence spake,
A Lee-Enfield of very modern make;
  "They sneer at me for having no Cut-off,
Why has not Northcliffe one, for Goodness' sake?"

LXIV

Said one "Folk of a handy Conscience tell,
And scream Objections in the Press as well;
  They'd sooner die than fight for Freedom—pish!
They've got to toe the Line—all will be well."

LXV

Then said another with a long drawn Sigh:
"This conscientious Stuff is all my Eye;
  Let's make him keep our Britain's Conscience first,
And talk about his Conscience bye and bye.

LXVI

And while the Rifles one by one were speaking,
One spied the Break of Day the World was seeking,
  And then they jogged each other "Brother, Brother,
The Heavens are full of Light—Look, some is leaking."

LXVII

Lord, with Thy Light my fading Life provide,
And let it shine from Heaven far and wide;
  Lest Murder, such as this War, blindly grope,
Nor find a Virtue under which to hide.

LXVIII

That all our buried Soldiers, such a Snare
Of Perfume shall fling up into the Air,
  That stinking War shall show for what it is,
And fragrant Peace shall flourish everywhere.

LXIX

Indeed the Idols we have loved so long,
These scientific Days seem all dead wrong;
  We're torn to Pieces by a Chemical
Because we listened to a Jingo Song.

LXX

Indeed against this Soldiering before
I swore—was I in earnest when I swore?
  And then—and then came War and Poison Gas;
I joined the Bunch and babbled Peace no more.

LXXI

And much as War has played the Infidel
And robbed me of my peaceful Notions—well
  I often wonder what the Soldiers gain
One half as precious as the Lives they sell.

LXXII

Alas, that men should be shot down in Rows,
That Youth's sweet scented Manuscript should close,
  A Holocaust to please an Imbecile,
Who yet may be an Emperor, who knows?

LXXIII

Ah, Friend, could you and I with Fate conspire;
To cure this Imbecile's insane Desire,
  Would we not smash his Armaments to Bits
And put his turgid War Books in the fire?

LXXIV

But, blood red War dim ing and shall wane,
The Sun of Peace is ing once again;
  How oft hereafter rising shall he look
For any Hint of War—and look in vain.

LXXV

And when Thyself with shining Feet shall tread
Among the Soldier Victims—Thy bent head
  Shall promise for their death an Endless Peace;
Forgive us if we hate—we have our Dead.

HURLEY PRINTING CO., LIMITED
BRANTFORD, CANADA